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July 26, 2021

Honorable David Scott
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Glenn Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Thompson:

Thank you for your ongoing leadership of the Agriculture Committee and the work to address pressing issues facing the agricultural industry. As you know, ensuring farmers and ranchers have the tools and resources to withstand the losses resulting from severe weather events is of great importance. Therefore, the National Cotton Council and the cotton industry's producer segment, the American Cotton Producers, strongly support the 2020 WHIP+ Reauthorization Act and the amendment in the nature of a substitute that the Committee plans to consider at the markup this week.

Cotton producers across the U.S. cotton belt faced various severe weather events in 2020 ranging from drought in the Southwest and West, to hurricanes and flooding in the Midsouth and Southeast. The combined losses on cotton in 2020 alone are estimated at four million bales of production with a value of \$1.6 billion. Thus far in 2021, some areas of the cotton belt are already facing significant weather challenges ranging from drought to flooding depending on the region.

We applaud your actions to begin work on a disaster assistance package for both 2020 and 2021 in order to help deliver the much-needed relief to farmers and ranchers across the nation. Specifically, the modifications and enhancements being considered for WHIP+ will be of significant benefit to many cotton producers, such as expanding the cause of loss to include excessive heat and drought coverage to counties with a Secretarial designation, along with contiguous counties. We are also very supportive of the administrative changes being made such as use of net indemnities for the payment calculation, clarification that a subsequent planted crop is eligible if insured, treatment of unharvested acres, and streamlining the application process.

Thank you for your work on this important issue and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to help advance agricultural disaster assistance legislation for the 2020 and 2021 crop years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Fountain".

Kent Fountain
Chairman
National Cotton Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark McKean".

Mark McKean
Chairman
American Cotton Producers